



F. ROUBAUD.

RUSSIA. VII

GRAVURE F. HANFSTAENGL



THE EXPANSION OF EMPIRE

(Russia, by Capturing the Leader, Suppresses the Last Struggle for Freedom in the Caucasus)

From a painting by F. Rouband, the noted Russian historical painter

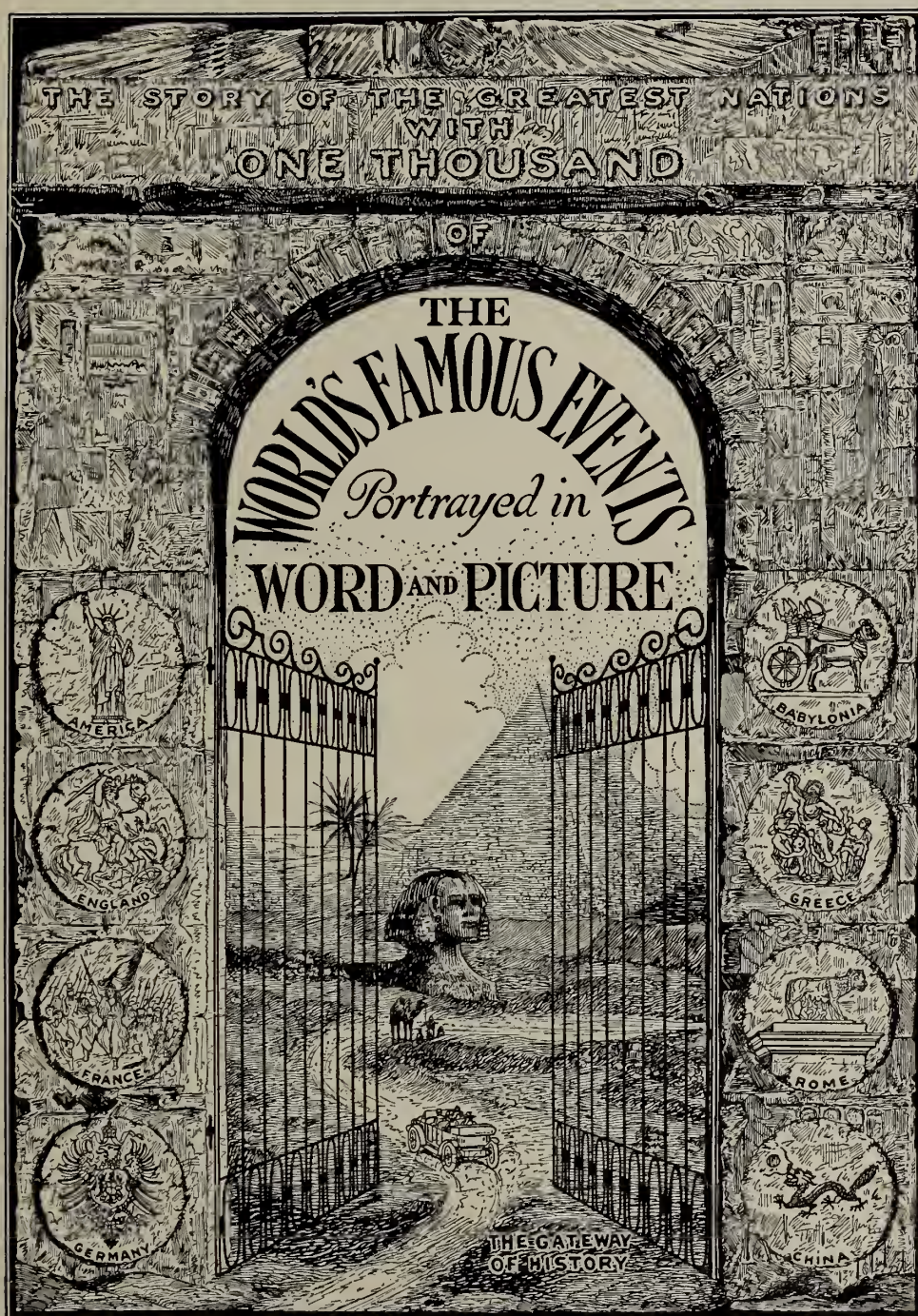
RUSSIA has built up her mighty empire by a steady process of expansion extending over centuries. To the eastward of the Russians there have always been tribes less civilized than they; and one by one the Russians have absorbed these feebler races. Most noted of these acquisitions of subjects and territory within the past century has been the conquest of the Caucasus, the region of mighty mountains which lies between the Black and Caspian Seas. This land was first seized from Turkey in 1829; but its inhabitants, secure in their mountain fastnesses, refused to accept the new suzerainty.

Their great leader was the Circassian chieftain Schamyl, of whom so many remarkable tales were told that he has become a hero of romance, the typical figure of his race of mountaineers. At one time he was left for dead upon the field of battle. At another a walled town which he was defending was captured, and every man within it was slain to insure Schamyl's death. Yet he reappeared among his followers. Russia paid with thousands of lives and millions of money for the subjugation of the region. At length in 1859, when the mountains were fairly swarming with Russian troops, Schamyl abandoned the long contest as hopeless, and secured peace for his countrymen by coming forward and surrendering himself. He was treated with respect and honor by the Russians, and remained in semi-captivity in Moscow until his death.



THE EMPIRE OF THE

Ru...



Volume Seventh



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2016

<https://archive.org/details/storyofgreatestn49elli>



RUSSIA IN EUROPE

(Showing Her Present Territory as Compared With That Before the Days of Peter the Great)

Specially prepared for the present series by Austin Smith

IF you look at a map of Europe you will note that Russia occupies most of the eastern half of it. And if you take a map of the eastern hemisphere you see Russia's territory extending on across all northern Asia, till it reaches the islands of Japan. Thus Russia is both of the west and of the east, touches both civilizations of the world. Her empire extends over the largest single piece of territory in the world. The British empire is larger, but it lies scattered over many lands and islands. Russia's vast land is one and undivided. And it is always growing. If we look back at the Europe of two, three or even more centuries ago we find the western nations England, France, Germany of about the same size and place as now; but Russia has almost doubled her territories in Europe since Peter the Great seized upon his throne in 1689.

Most of her vast territories, however, are ice-bound. The extreme north is too cold even for farming; and St. Petersburg, the capital which Peter built in 1703, is covered with snow all winter long. The members of the Russian court enjoy life in a temperature which would seem to us almost unendurable; and the Russian peasantry are made hard and strong by their grim climate.







THE BURIAL OF RURIK

(Rurik, Founder of the Russian Nation, Honored at Death)

From a painting by Henry Siemiradzki, the Polish master (1843-1904)

RUSSIAN history begins with Rurik. He was a Norseman who in the ninth century landed among the scattered Slavs who dwelt along the eastern coasts of the cold Baltic Sea. These Slavs lived, as you may recall that the early Slavs of the Austrian regions did, in little separate settlements with no central government. Hence they were weak; and tradition says that they invited the fiercely fighting Norsemen to send them a king who would unite them and make them strong. So Rurik came; and as his people were known among these scattered Baltic tribes as Russi, gradually all the Slavs whom he drew under his control were called the Russians.

Rurik proved a strong ruler and built up a strong kingdom. At his death, his brother and successor, Oleg, erected for him a huge funeral pyre; and on this the mourning Slavs sacrificed in ancient fashion the chief's wives, his slaves, his favorite horses, his ship and his treasure. The Norse rulers had adopted the religion of the Slavs, and our illustration shows in the background the chief Slavic god, Perune, the god of thunder, borne in solemn procession to say farewell to Rurik.







CHRISTIANITY COMES TO RUSSIA

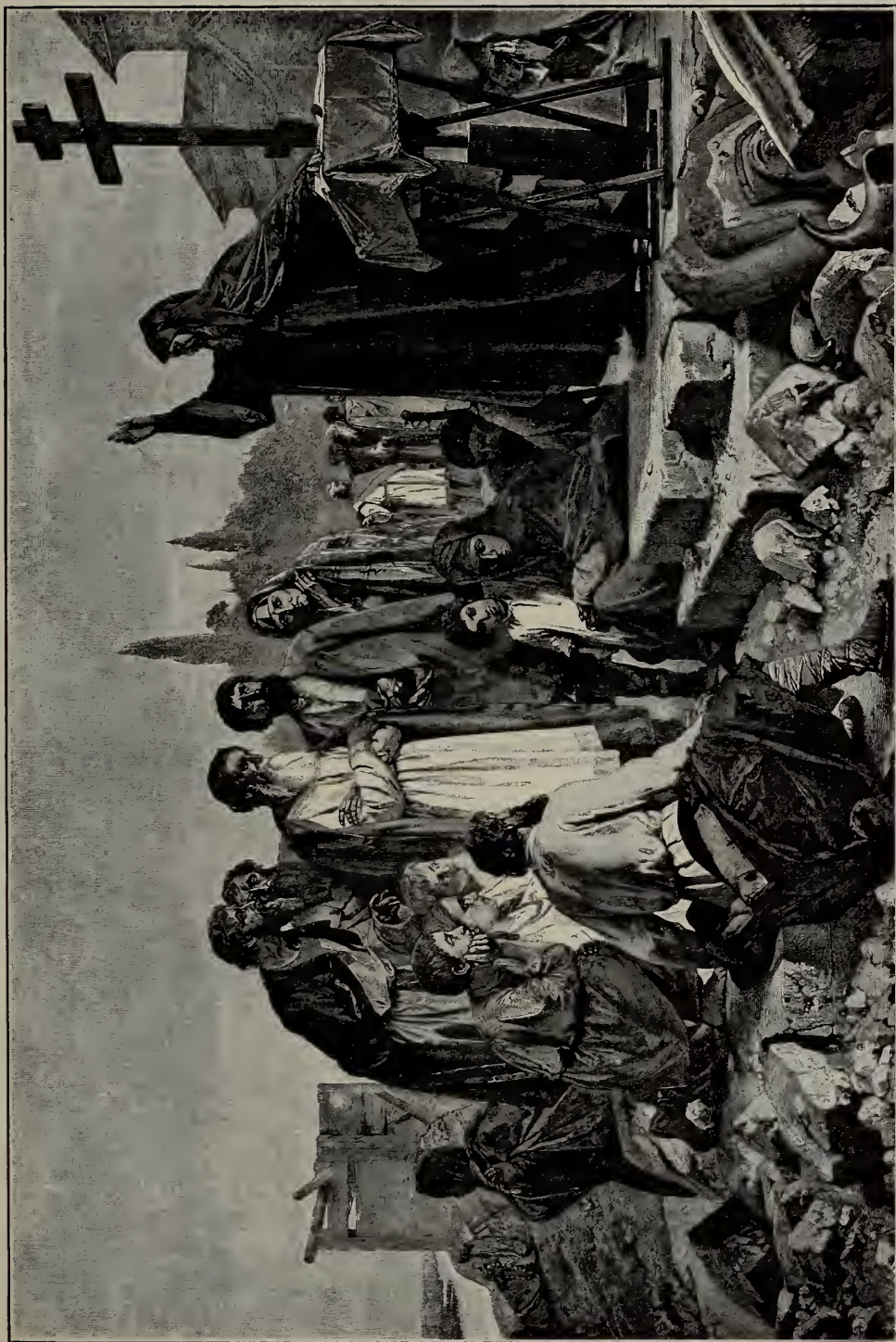
(Saint Andrew Preaches the New Faith to the Slavs in the First Century)

From a painting by the celebrated Russian master, Vassili Petrovitch Verestchagin (1842-1904)

LEGEND says that even before the days of Rurik the Slavs had heard of Christianity. Among their little scattered communities centuries before, there had come Saint Andrew, one of the seventy-two original apostles or teachers who spread abroad the faith of Christ. From Saint Andrew the Slavs had learned and accepted the first teachings of Christianity. But in the course of centuries the ignorant, untrained people had forgotten most of the essentials of the faith, and remembered only its doctrine of immortality and its sign of the cross. The making of this cross sign was still regarded by them as an action expressing deep reverence; though their "cross of St. Andrew" was different from the cross of western Europe, having a double instead of a single bar.

Christianity came again to Russia under the reign of its first queen, Olga. She was a Slavic maid who had wedded a son of Rurik. Her husband reigned and was killed in battle. Olga assumed the chieftainship and exacted a terrible vengeance for his death, utterly exterminating the race of enemies who had slain him. Then she resolved to turn Christian, and went in person to Constantinople, the head of the eastern Christian church, and was there baptized with much splendor. She has been canonized by the Russian church as its first native saint.







HEATHENISM'S LAST STAND

(Sviatoslav, the Last Pagan King, Defies the Christians by Offering Up Human Sacrifices)

From a painting by Henry Siemiradzki, the Polish master (1843-1904).

A PPARENTLY Queen Olga's form of Christianity did not appeal to the Russians, for few of them adopted it, and her own son Sviatoslav, rejected it violently. When he became king he restored the worship of the ancient Slavic gods, and even carried his vengeance so far that he attacked the Greek empire of Constantinople, whence the Christian teaching had come. Sviatoslav gained wide territories from the Greeks; but when he attacked Constantinople itself he was defeated and compelled to retreat.

He and his remaining warriors threw themselves into the Greek city of Dorostol and there defended themselves desperately. In defiance of the Christians they came out of the city every night and made sacrifice to their heathen gods, slaying all the prisoners they had captured during the day, including any survivors of the unhappy townsfolk or peasants they could seize in the surrounding neighborhood.

Sviatoslav was slain in battle, and his successor, his son Vladimir, restored Christianity as the state religion, obtaining priests and all the other requisites of the faith, by the unusual but practical method of attacking the Greek Empire and carrying off its churchmen and their belongings in a daring raid. Being obviously a determined converter, Vladimir used force to compel all his people to become Christians, and the faith was firmly established.







RUSSIA'S EARLY RULERS

(The Chief Sovereigns Before Peter the Great)

Specially prepared for the present work

RUSSIAN history shows very little of progress or civilization before the days of Peter the Great. We give here the portraits of its chief early rulers. Rurik, the founder, and Vladimir, the establisher of Christianity, were followed by Yaroslav, called the Just. Yaroslav made a resolute attempt to civilize his people, and he established a code of laws which still exists as the foundation of Russian law. Unfortunately, Yaroslav was more tender as a father than wise as a king; so he divided his domains among several sons. These did the same with their descendants, until presently the Russians were almost as much divided among tiny states as they had been before Rurik first established them as a nation.

In this enfeebled condition they were conquered by the Tartars, a horde of Asiatic savages who entered Europe early in the thirteenth century, and were repulsed from its western states by the Germans, after a desperate struggle. The first Russian chief to begin the rescue of his countrymen from the Tartars was Dimitri, whose picture is also shown here; and the work was completed by the crafty Ivan III called the Great, and the savage Ivan IV, the Terrible. The ancient line of kings died out with Feodore II, and Michael Romanoff was then elected king. He was the founder of the present Russian royal house, and was succeeded by his son Alexis, the father of Peter the Great.





VII-6

Vladimir
Michael Romanoff
Ivan the Terrible

Rurik
Alexis
Feodore III.

Dimitri Donski
Ivan the Great
Yaroslav the Just



DIMITRI DEFIES THE TARTARS

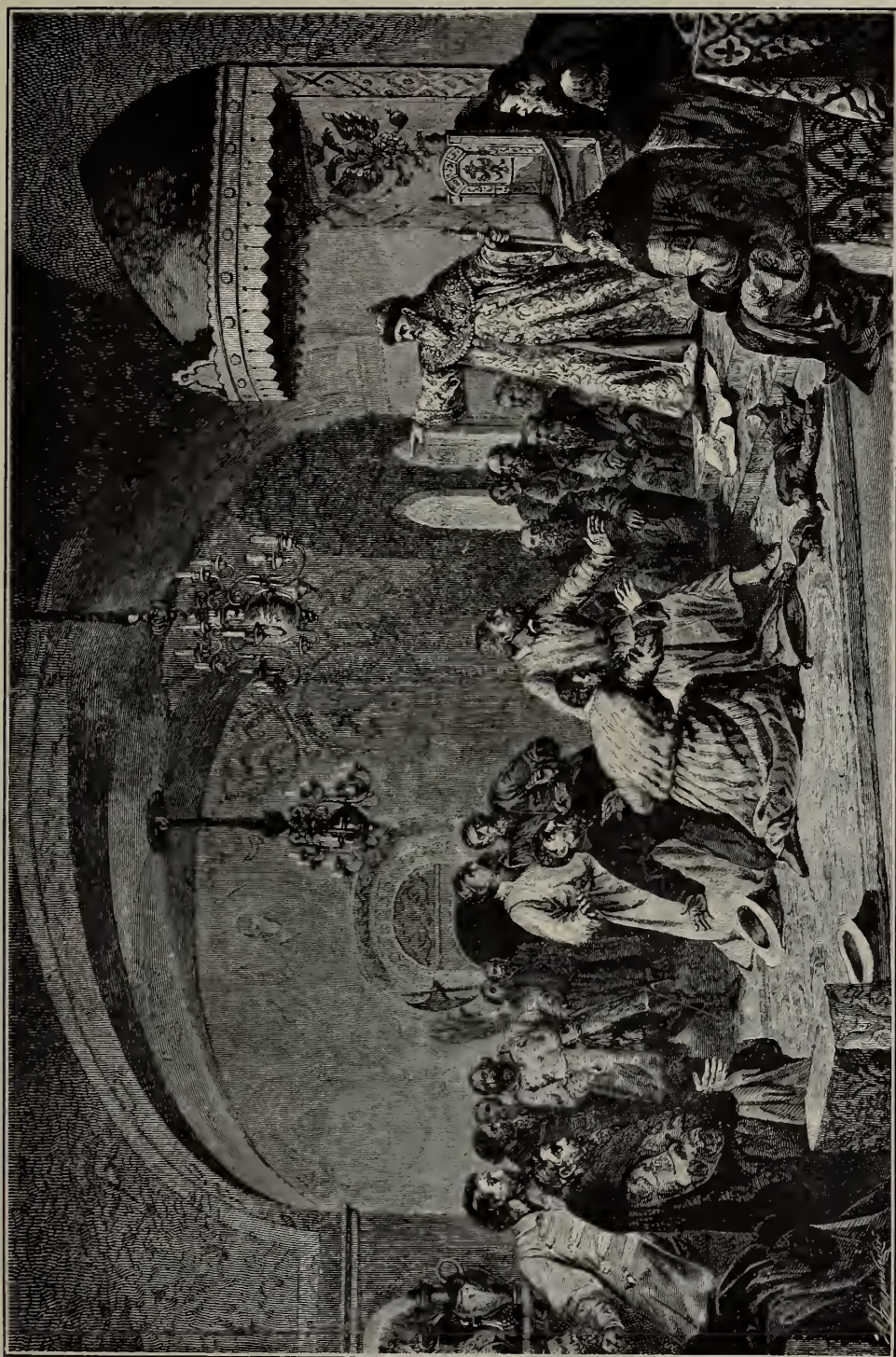
(He Refuses Tribute to the Tartar Envoys and Begins the Struggle for Independence)

From a painting by the Russian artist, R. J. Rjepin

WHEN the Tartars had ruled over Russia for over a hundred and fifty years, Dimitri the prince of Moscow, defied their power in the year 1380. Dimitri claimed descent, as did all the little Russian princes, from Rurik; but the possessions of Dimitri were very small, and he built up his capital city, Moscow, from small beginnings. It was under him that Moscow became the great military and religious center of the Russian people, from which they again extended their power over all the regions they had held before.

The Tartars had permitted Russian princes to rule in their name under condition of forwarding enormous taxes to the Tartar Khan, and submitting to most humiliating acts of servitude. The Russian prince held the stirrup of the Tartar envoy who visited the province, licked up the drops that fell from his drinking cup, and humbly kissed the foot of a little mannikin or doll representing the Tartar Khan, which was brought to him for his homage. At length Dimitri refused the tribute and, casting down the image of the Khan which was presented to him, trampled it under his foot in added insult. The Tartar army came to punish him, and he defeated them in a great battle on the river Don. Afterward the Tartars besieged Dimitri in Moscow and burned all the city except its central stronghold, the Kremlin. This they could not capture; the independence of the Russians had begun.







IVAN ESTABLISHES RUSSIAN INDEPENDENCE

(Ivan the Great Rejects the Last Shred of Tartar Rule)

From the historical series by V. P. Verestchagin

SIMILAR to Dimitri's defiance of the Tartars was that of Ivan the Great, a century later. At this time the Tartars still held a nominal authority over Russia, but their power had so weakened that Ivan III, Grand Duke of Moscow, was able to win the real sovereignty of most of central Russia. His neighbors recognized him as a powerful sovereign, and Sophia, the heiress of the Greek empire of Constantinople, became his bride. To be sure Constantinople itself had just been captured by another Asiatic race, the Turks. Yet Sophia brought to Russia something which the country still values, its claim to be regarded as the inheritor and real successor of the ancient Emperors of the East, who in the days of Constantine had ruled the world. So Sophia's son called himself Cæsar or Czar, instead of merely Grand Duke of Moscow.

It was Sophia who urged her husband to war against the Tartars. He had continued to pay them a nominal tribute for the sake of peace; but in 1478 he tore up the letter sent to demand the tribute, and insulted the envoys. The angry ambassadors would have attacked him personally; but they were seized by his attendants and were all slain except one, who was permitted to live to carry back to his master Ivan's defiance. Of course this resulted in another struggle, at the close of which Ivan's complete independence was admitted by the Tartars. They still, however, ruled over eastern Russia, with their capital at Kazan.





1854

1854



IVAN IV AND THE CHURCH

(Ivan is Rebuked by His Chief Bishop and Declares Himself Head of the Russian Church)

From a painting by the Russian artist, Prof. Pukereff

IVAN THE TERRIBLE was a grandson of Ivan the Great. His rule was contemporaneous with that of Elizabeth in England and that of the sons of Catharine de Medici in France. Ivan was probably insane; at least on no other grounds can we explain many of his wild freaks and apparently purposeless brutalities. He massacred thousands of people, often killing them with his own hands, and always expressing a fiendish pleasure as he watched his victims under torture.

Philip, the Patriarch or head of the Russian church, finally came in solemn array before the Czar and rebuked him for his murders. Ivan protested amaze that so holy a man as he should thus be insulted by accusations. He tried to force Philip by torture to retract his words, and failing in this put the brave bishop to a horrible death. The Czar then announced that he would himself rule his church. He thus followed the lead of Henry VIII of England in claiming the headship of a national church; but as Ivan was dealing with Russian peasants sunk in the very depths of ignorance, his claim was absolute and was accepted as such. The Russian peasantry believed in him; they kissed his hands even as he killed them. It is possible that Ivan believed in himself and in his divinely appointed mission to reform the world; for he proclaimed a valuable series of church laws, in his "Book of the Hundred Chapters," which did much to restrain many evil practices and superstitious rites.







DEATH OF IVAN THE TERRIBLE

(He Expires of Rage at the Stupidity of His Son Feodore)

From the painting by the Russian artist K. E. Makowski

SUCH careers as that of the terrible Ivan can only end as his ended, in gloomy misery and despair. His wife, whom he is said to have loved dearly, died early in his reign. His elder son angered him by a moment's opposition; and Ivan, whose temper was utterly unrestrained, raised his iron-pointed staff and struck his son dead at his feet. Ivan grieved for this, principally perhaps because it left the succession to the throne in the hands of a younger son, Feodore, who was weak-witted. The czar then sank into gloom, though trying with little success to train and stimulate the mind of his remaining heir. At length while playing a game of chess with the young man, Ivan became so infuriated at his stupidity as to fall dead in his excess of rage. So Feodore the feeble minded became Czar.

Horrible as was Ivan's life, he was yet one of the most important rulers of Russia. He attacked the Tartars in their own home of eastern Russia and, by capturing their capital Kazan and afterward their great trading metropolis Astrakhan, he completely turned the ancient tables and made the Tartars subject to the Russians. Thus he more than doubled the extent of his territory. He also came into conflict with the Germans to the westward and, by driving them out of their colonies east of the Baltic, began advancing Russia's frontier to the west as well as to the east.







THE FOUNDING OF THE ROMANOFFS

(Michael, First of the Present Line of Russian Emperors, Elected and Crowned
After the Expulsion of the Poles)

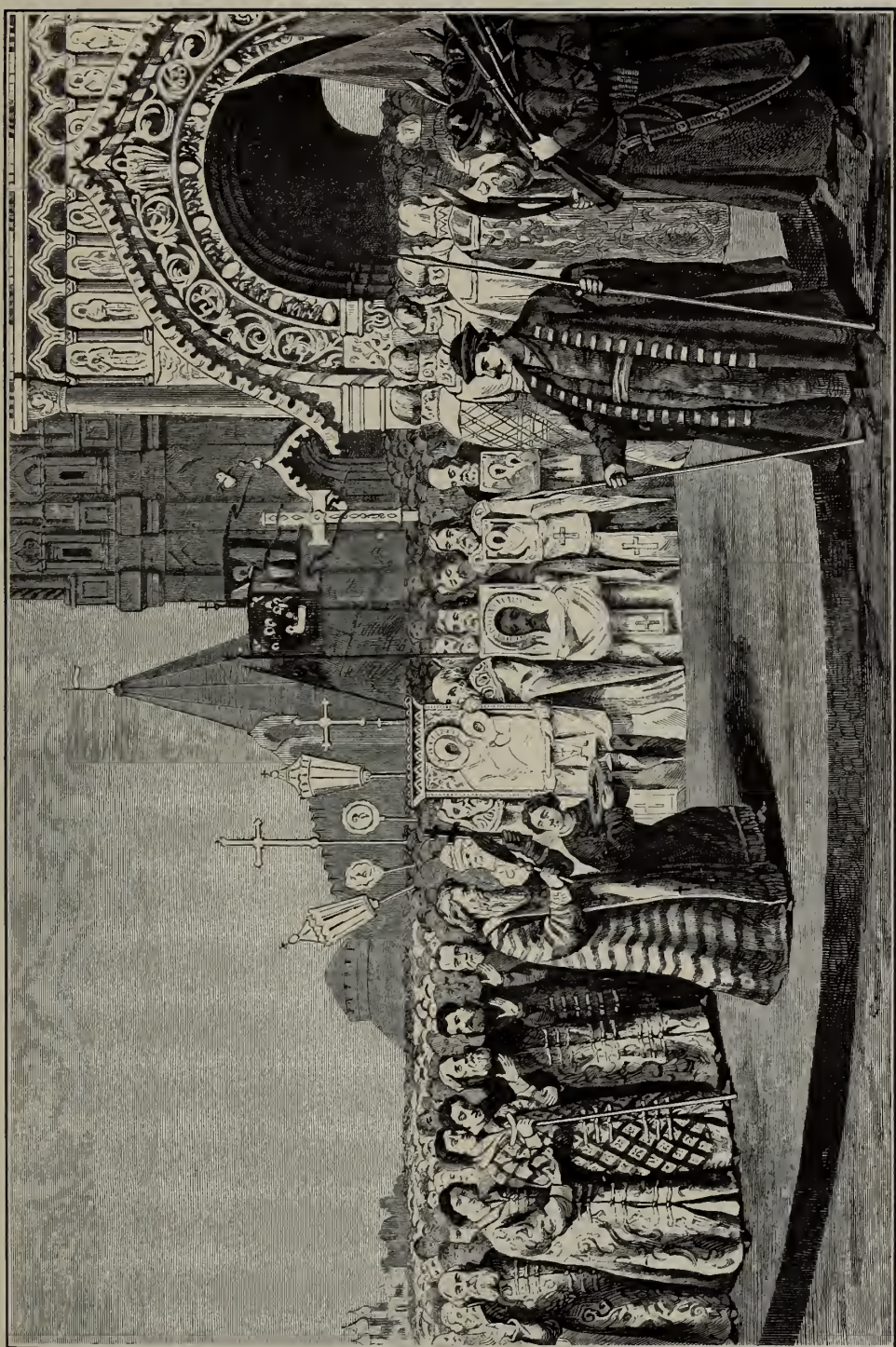
From a series of old Russian prints

AS was to have been expected, the reign of the feeble-minded Feodore plunged Russia into anarchy. He was ruled by evil favorites, one of whom, Boris Godonov, got possession of the throne after the death of all the legitimate heirs. He was accused of having slain them all. Impostors sprang up, claiming to be this or that member of the royal house who had mysteriously escaped from Boris' hands. One of these, "the false Dimitri," who claimed to be the youngest son of Ivan the Terrible, overthrew the son of Boris and ruled in his place. The Poles, taking advantage of the disrupted state of Russia, invaded the land and made their own sovereign Czar. They held possession of Moscow for nearly four years.

At length the humiliated Russians burst into furious revolt and, led not by their former chieftains, but by some of their own peasants and country priests, they drove the Poles from the land. Then the patriots, both nobles and commons, held a meeting and chose as their king Michael Romanoff, a young noble of sixteen. He was chosen mainly because of the reverence felt for his father, the bishop of Rostoff, who was held a prisoner by the Poles.

Thus Michael was crowned as a freely elected king (1613). He was the founder of the present royal house of Russia, the Romanoffs.









THE TARTARS ENTERING RUSSIA

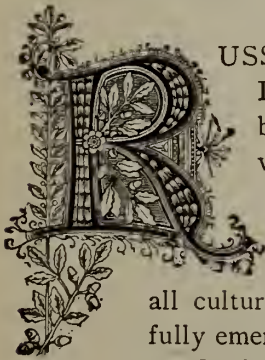
THE STORY OF THE GREATEST NATIONS

MODERN NATIONS—RUSSIA

Chapter CXX

THE LEGENDARY AGE IN RUSSIA.

[*Authorities* : Ralston, "Early Russian History"; Rambaud, "History of Russia"; Allison, "History of Europe"; Bell, "History of Russia"; Kelly, "History of Russia"; Tooke, "History of Russia"; Howorth, "History of the Mongols"; Diary of Sir Jerome Horsey; Motley, "Peter the Great"; Segur, "History of Russia and of Peter the Great"; John Cook, "Memoirs"; Catharine II., "Memoirs"; Dunham, "History of Poland"; Day, "The Russian Government in Poland"; Kinglake, "The Crimean War"; Tilly, "Eastern Europe and Western Asia"; Schuyler, "Turkistan"; Schnitzler, "Russia under Alexander and Nicholas"; Argyll, "The Eastern Question"; Gurowski, "Russia as it Is"; Morfill, "The Story of Russia"; Latimer, "Russia and Turkey in the Nineteenth Century"; Maxwell, "The Czar and his People"; Wallace, "Russia"; Norman, "All the Russias"; Palmer, "Russian Life in Town and Country"; Wolkonsky, "Pictures of Russian History and Russian Literature."]



RUSSIA is in one sense the youngest of the European nations.

Long after the more Western countries were in the full burst of historic splendor, Russia was still a region of vague legends, wrapped in the mist of primeval barbarism.

It was not until the time of Elizabeth of England that the wild Russian tribes united into a recognized state, and found themselves ages behind their neighbors in all culture and civilization. Indeed, even to-day Russia has not fully emerged from her barbaric ignorance.

Oddly enough, it is of this uncouthness of their land that Russian statesmen make most boast. For they will tell you that she is young, and that as her people develop she will launch upon a career of many

centuries of mature strength, that she will flourish long after older nations have sunk into senile decay.

Our tale must begin, therefore, in Russia even more than elsewhere, with an age of legends, and you must not take all that we gather from the old records of the monks as being accurate history. The men here told of did truly live and fight and die, just as surely as you and I to-day, but just what they did is doubtful, and why they did it even more so. You can read in one chronicle that they were saints, impelled only by the noblest aspirations. In another you will be informed that they were incarnate fiends. Perhaps we had best look for the truth at neither extreme, and accept them as ordinary men and women very like ourselves, aiming to do right but often sorely tempted.

The first date which we are able to associate definitely with Russia's story is the year 862 A.D. In that year, Alfred the Great in England was fighting the Northmen. In France, Charles the Bald had definitely established a nation, and was sadly watching the Norse pirates lay waste its borders. At the same time, another band of those wonderful sea-wanderers entered Russia. They were "invited to rule," say the Russians, but the expression is presumably a graceful way of admitting conquest.

Rurik, which is perhaps a corruption of the Norse Roderick, was the leader of the sturdy invaders, the first monarch of the Russian nation, and to-day highly honored as its founder. He captured Novgorod, the earliest of Russia's great cities, situated not far from the Baltic Sea and connected with it by a river, up which the Norsemen came.

With Novgorod as his capital and stronghold, Rurik gradually extended his sway over the surrounding people. Of what race were these? It is hard to say. Probably of many different stocks, some Aryan, some Sclavic. The ancient Roman writers knew little of them and vaguely included them all as "Scythians." At any rate, Rurik and his Norsemen soon fused with their subjects as a single race, just as his brethren did with the French of Normandy or with the Saxons of England. They even adopted the pagan religion of the Russians,* and after death Rurik was burned on a huge funeral pyre, seated in his boat with his slaves and wives around him.

Rurik's successor, his brother Oleg, led the Russians against the wild tribes to the southward and conquering the fair city of Kief made it his capital. Kief, which you will find on your map in southern Russia on the great river Dnieper, was a far brighter and pleasanter home than wintry Novgorod, and it thus became the second capital and chief metropolis of the growing kingdom. Kief is called the mother of all Russian cities.

*The origin of the name Russia is not positively known except that it is modernized from the more ancient word *Russ*, which used to be applied to both the land and the people.

In Kief, Igor, a son of Rurik, bore rule and wedded a fair maiden, Olga. Igor was slain in battle, and Olga most bitterly avenged his death. She received a deputation from the people who had slain him, offering to atone by wedding her to their own prince. Olga secretly slew all the deputies, while sending word to the enemy to send more. These also she slew in secret, and pretending to agree to the wedding, coaxed all the nobility of the hated land to attend the feast. During its progress, they were suddenly attacked and killed; and then throwing off the mask, Olga advanced with fire and sword against the common people. They defended themselves desperately in their capital city, until Olga offered to make peace on payment of a tribute of live pigeons. Naturally the exhausted foe gladly agreed to such an easy settlement; but when Olga had the birds, she bound fire upon the back of each, and released them. They flew straight to their homes, and the flames rose everywhere. Soon the city was in ashes, while Olga's troops hunted down the miserable townfolk, amid the ruins of their dwelling-places.

Olga now decided to turn Christian. Whether she was most actuated by remorse or by pride is not quite clear. Instead of sending for priests she journeyed all the way to Constantinople and was there baptized with great magnificence. This is the first positive historic mention of Christianity in Russia; but the legends assert that Saint Andrew the Apostle came to the land in the first Christian century, was eagerly welcomed, and founded the faith at Kief. Gradually, however, the people forgot his teachings, though they never forgot the symbol of signing themselves with the cross, and continued to use the gesture as one of deep reverence. At any rate the faith faded, and Olga has been canonized by the Russian Church as its earliest native saint.

The religion did not, however, spread rapidly among her people. They despised the unwarlike Greeks from whom she brought it, and the Queen's own son, Sviatoslav, refused to accept it. He voiced the general feeling of the wild race by declaring the new faith to be fit only for cowards.

This Sviatoslav restored the pagan religion to its full power, held human sacrifices, and spent his life in war. He was a great warrior, we are told, and widely extended the Russian dominions, even attacking the Greek Emperor of the East at Constantinople. Here, however, he was repulsed; and the Greeks following him up besieged him in their city of Dorostol, which he had captured. Day after day Sviatoslav and his wild followers would burst forth from their shelter and fight, until driven back. Then each night their diminishing band made a sacrifice under the city walls of some of their Greek prisoners from Dorostol or of those they had captured during the day.

At last the few survivors asked for peace, and Sviatoslav pledged himself

never to attack the Greeks again. He kept his word, for on his way back to Kief he and his handful of followers were ambushed by other enemies and slain. His skull was made into a drinking cup, from which his foemen thought to imbibe his strength and courage.

Vladimir, a son of Šviatoslav, firmly established the Christian religion throughout his land. Hence he has been called "the Sunny" and "the Saint," though both terms seem singularly inappropriate to the character of the man. One tale represents him as carefully weighing all the different faiths of earth, and at last selecting the Greek form of Christianity. Another says he resolved to be Christian, but would not subject himself to any bishop whether of Rome or Constantinople. Accordingly he stormed a Christian city on the Black Sea, captured it, and carried off monks, holy utensils, and sacred relics, in quantities sufficient to establish at once a fully equipped religious system of his own.

The chief Russ god in the old pagan days had been Perune, god of thunder. His main image stood at Kief, and King Vladimir, whether because of his own ignorant barbarism or as an object-lesson to his people, had the image cut down, dragged through the streets like a log, beaten all the way with sticks, and finally dumped into the river. Then the King ordered his people to be baptized, and all together they marched obediently into the river and went through the ceremony. The date of this wholesale conversion has been officially set as 988, and its nine hundredth anniversary was celebrated a few years back.

Vladimir divided his kingdom among his sons, but most of it ultimately reverted into the hands of one of them, Yaroslav the Just, Russia's first law-giver. His code of laws is still extant and resembles that of all the early Scandinavian or Teutonic peoples.

The action of Vladimir in parcelling his kingdom among his sons was by no means a new arrangement, but after the days of Yaroslav the Just the dangerous system was carried so far that at length we find some seventy little kings ruling over different parts of the land, all of them claiming descent from Rurik and from Yaroslav. Internal wars became frequent, the strength of the country declined, and it threatened to sink back into the utter barbarism from which it had so recently emerged.

During over two centuries only one man rises for a moment into sufficient prominence to be mentioned. This is Vladimir Monomachus (1113-1125), whom we find deserting Kief, the ancient city, for a new capital of his own. He wedded a daughter of the unhappy English King, Harold, though how she had accomplished the dreary and perilous journey to the Russian court is a matter of astonishment. This Vladimir was also a writer, and a fascinating fragment

of his work still exists describing the wild extravagance and excitement of his half-savage life.

About 1223 came the vast Tartar invasion of Russia. The Asiatic hordes were met bravely; but, divided as the land had come to be among so many petty princelings, it could make no effectual resistance. The ferocious Tartars plundered it almost at will, and swept onward into Germany and Hungary. In these lands, as you may remember, they appeared about 1240 and were only driven back after a terrible struggle, long, bloody, and exhaustive.

They then established their "Empire of the Golden Horde," as they called it, in southeastern Russia, and for over two centuries the land was under their cruel dominion. It was during this period that the Russian people acquired their somewhat Asiatic character. "Scratch a Russian," says a well-known proverb, "and you will find a Tartar"; and there is no question that the race to-day shows a distinct strain of Asiatic blood. The Russian princelings of the north and west were allowed to retain their positions, but they were compelled to submit to a most humiliating vassalage. When a Tartar envoy came to one of their courts, the prince acted as his servant; and when the mounted Tartar drank his parting cup, the prince had to lick away the drops that fell upon the horse's mane.

Gradually, however, the power of the "Golden Horde" was broken, just as that of the Russians had been, by division among several rulers. In 1380 Dimitri, the Russ prince of Moscow, defied the Tartars. He trampled on the image of the Khan which had been sent him to salute, and he refused the established tribute. In a great battle near the River Don on the "field of woodcocks," Dimitri burned his boats behind him that his people could not flee, and they then completely defeated their opponents. The chroniclers tell us that at the close of the terrible day the conqueror had but forty thousand followers left out of an army of two hundred thousand. It is certain that scarce two years later the Tartars captured Moscow and burned it to the ground. Nothing but the stone-built palace, the Kremlin, escaped the flames.

The Principality of Moscow became recognized, however, as the centre of patriotic resistance to the oppressor. Its power increased as that of the Tartars waned, and a century later (1478) its Grand Duke, Ivan III., tore in pieces the letter which the Tartar ruler sent to demand tribute. This open defiance stamps the end of Asiatic rule in Russia.

Ivan, or if we translate his name into English, John, the Third, is called Ivan the Great. His reign lasted from 1462 to 1505, and is thus contemporary with the full flood of the Renaissance in Italy, and with the close of the Middle Ages in Western Europe. In France, Louis XI. was establishing the full strength of the royal power; Henry VII. was coming nigh to equal abso-

lutism in England; Maximilian was pretending to it in Germany. The period was also one of vast importance to Russia. We might almost express her position by saying that she was just an era behind her neighbors, and with the downfall of Tartar domination was passing from barbarism to mediævalism. Ivan is regarded as the founder of the modern Russian monarchy.

The man himself who thus closes the legendary age of Russia is perhaps a more perplexing figure than any of the earlier chieftains. We are told that he was a demon of cruelty, yet under his rule the Russian people made vast advances in comfort, happiness, and security. We hear that he was a coward, the most abject, yet he was successful in every war he undertook; that he was utterly false and treacherous, yet he lived up to his treaties with Western nations better than they did themselves.

Four things Ivan did for Russia. At least there were four which deserve special remembrance, as greater than the others. First, he consolidated and made real the power which, as Grand Duke, he held nominally over all the other little princelings. His ultimate triumph in this line was the conquest of Novgorod the Great.

Note that Ivan's capital, Moscow, is the third Russian city of which we have spoken. The older capital, Kief, had fallen into desolation, been plundered by Tartars and by Russians, and had finally been lost to Russia altogether, passing under the dominion of her Western neighbors Poland and Lithuania.

Novgorod, the ancient landing-place of Rurik and his Norsemen, had fared very differently. She lay so far to the northward as to have escaped entirely the Tartar ravages. Moreover, she was the one Russian port by which trade could enter the country from the Baltic Sea. German merchants settled there, and Novgorod became a leading member of the mighty Hanseatic League of trading cities. In the time of Ivan III., her population is said to have reached four hundred thousand; she was one of the great commercial centres of the world, the metropolis of an extensive republic. No other Russian city could be named beside her. Indeed, their old saying still survives among the peasantry, "Who can withstand God and Novgorod the Great!"

This gigantic and practically independent city Ivan set himself to reduce. He feigned friendship for it, won the confidence of the citizens, and then suddenly asserted that his nominal lordship over them entailed absolute ownership. The astounded people defied him, gathered their armies, and called on Poland for help. But Poland was slow in responding and Ivan was prompt. He appeared before the city with an army so enormous that the men of Novgorod despaired. There was no battle; indeed the crafty Ivan never risked the chances of actual conflict when he could possibly avoid it. Novgorod sub-

mitted under promise of kindness, and Ivan, planting his soldiers in the city, found excuse under various trivial charges to imprison or execute all who had headed the movement against him.

A few years later, he suspected, or pretended to suspect, opposition among the foreign merchants dwelling in Novgorod, and promptly imprisoned them all, confiscating their enormous wealth. Such of the unhappy victims as survived their sufferings were finally released, but their property was never restored. Naturally, no other foreigners cared to trust themselves in Novgorod, the trade of the city disappeared, and it sank by degrees into the mere grass-grown village that it is to-day.

The next in order of Ivan's achievements was his wedding with Zoe, or Sophia, the heiress of the Byzantine Empire. You will recall that the Turks had conquered Constantinople in 1453. Thus Sophia brought to her husband nothing but an empty title to a ruined and captured land, which he certainly had no intention of fighting to recover. Nevertheless, this was the most important wedding in Russian history. From it comes the claim of the Russian rulers to be regarded as the "Emperors of the East," the Cæsars or Czars, inheritors of the Empire of Rome, rightful heirs to Turkey in Europe, and to all Western Asia. As descendants of Sophia, the Czars adopted the standard of the double-headed eagle, which had been Byzantine, and which now floats upon the Russian flag.

It was Sophia who drove Ivan to his third important deed, the defiance of the Tartars. She kept complaining to her husband that she might have wedded a king of Western Europe, and had come to him supposing him an independent and mighty sovereign. So at last Ivan yielded, as husbands will. To oblige his wife he overcame his excessive and constitutional unwillingness to fight, and dramatically tore the Khan's letter, as we have told. He had long evaded the payment of any serious tribute, but that was a very different thing from flatly refusing it.

Russia went wild with joy, and an enormous army gathered round their sovereign. War was inevitable. A great Tartar army came to avenge the insult. The two hordes approached the River Oka and, sitting down upon opposite banks, each defied the other to cross. You may be sure Ivan was not the one to chance the rash assault. Indeed, so extreme seemed his fear that he lost all control of himself and fled from his army. His nobles and priests openly and scornfully upbraided him. They hounded him back to his command.

Winter came upon the inactive armies. One night the river between them froze solid, and it became an easy matter for either force to charge directly on the other. The prospect was really too much for Ivan's nerves, and he disap-

peared again. His army suddenly discovered him gone, a panic seized them and they ran away, every man of them, without once looking behind. The land lay open to the Tartars, but they were too wary to be caught in a trap. The sudden disappearance of the vast army awaiting them, suggested an ambuscade. Perhaps they were being surrounded! Their leaders thought it wise to withdraw a little way. They fled.

Such is the remarkable tale vouched for by the Russian chronicles. In its retreat the Tartar army encountered that of another Khan and was completely overthrown. Ivan hastened to make peace with the conqueror upon terms of mutual equality, and then boasted of his own retreat as a masterpiece of successful diplomacy.

One thing more Ivan achieved. He compelled Western Europe to recognize Russia as a nation and as one of their family, not the least among them. It was not only his marriage with Sophia that did this. He warred against Poland and Lithuania, and recovered from the latter kingdom much of the ancient Russian territory in the south. He fought successfully against the German "Knights Hospitallers," who held the Baltic coast. He formed alliances with Sweden and with Venice. The Emperor Maximilian of Germany offered to wed one of his chief lords to Ivan's daughter, and Ivan refused because the offer was beneath her dignity.

"I will get the Pope to crown you a King," said Maximilian.

"I am a sovereign now and will submit to be crowned by nobody," answered Ivan. He married his daughter to the King of Lithuania and Poland; and eventually brought about an honorable peace between their nations.

In this manner Ivan the Great lived and reigned with great shrewdness, if with no higher quality. Before his death the Russian principalities were all firmly within his grip, and Europe had acknowledged his power. He ruled under the title of Grand Duke; but his son and successor, Basil, felt justified in assuming the broader title of Emperor or Czar.





MARIANA ENTREATING MERCY OF CHOUISKI

Chapter CXXI

IVAN THE TERRIBLE AND THE "PERIOD OF TROUBLES"

BASIL completed the work of Ivan III. in consolidating Russia and expelling the Tartars. Then he died and left his throne to his three-year-old son, Ivan IV., the notorious Ivan the Terrible. In 1543, when only twelve years old, Ivan felt that he ought to be his own master and refused to be directed by those in whose charge he had been placed at his mother's death; but one so young could not wholly free himself from the control of his maternal relatives. When but sixteen he was married to Anastasia Romanova, a Russian, for it had not yet become the regular rule of the Russian emperors to form alliances through marriage with other sovereigns of Europe.

No better fortune could have befallen Ivan than his union with this noble woman, who so long as she lived exerted a blessed influence over him. She was devotedly attached to her husband, while he respected and loved her for her many virtues and her fine intellect. The future of no couple could have been more promising, but dark and tempestuous days were lowering in the future.

No one can doubt the ability of Ivan IV., and his services to his native land were of a high character. He reached his legal majority upon his marriage in 1547, and again he was fortunate in having the best of advisers not only in his wife, but in his ministers, Sylvester and Adascheff, upon whom for a time he leaned and whose counsels he wisely followed.

It is hard in these days to comprehend the degrading superstition that

prevailed among all classes in Europe two or three centuries ago. The Russian clergy were so debased that truly they were the "blind leading the blind." Ivan abolished many of the wicked practices and brought about a great improvement in the morals of these teachers. Numerous schools were established throughout the empire, in which the children received elementary instruction and in the Scriptures. The Emperor published a Book of Laws as well as another that regulated the affairs of the Church.

Ivan proved himself a good military leader, though lacking in personal courage. He established the first standing army, and wherever he moved his troops they were victorious. The city of Kazan was the ancient capital of the Tartar kingdom of that name and stood on the river Kazanka, in Eastern Russia. It was founded by the Tartars in 1257, and was a strongly fortified place. In 1552, Ivan led his army against it, and after a long and bloody siege captured the city and annexed the kingdom. Astrakan, originally a province of the Tartar empire, was conquered by him in 1554 and also annexed. The turbulent Tartars or Cossacks in the Crimea were compelled to remain quiet, and the German "Knights Hospitallers," as they were called, were driven out of the Baltic provinces of Livonia and Esthonia. Ivan had introduced printing into Russia, and saw the need of bringing other Western arts and industries into his empire. He sent excellent workmen to the frontiers that they might learn the improved trades, but his neighbors were so jealous that they compelled the seekers after knowledge to face about and go home.

A dreadful blow fell upon Ivan in 1560, when his wife died. The shock was so great that he never recovered from it. His whole nature underwent a change. He became sour, gloomy, morose, and suspicious of every one. Those who had been his best friends he now considered his bitterest enemies, forever plotting his ruin. Even the most excellent of all his counsellors, Sylvester and Adascheff, were banished, and the wonder is that they were not beheaded, for Ivan put thousands to death for no other reason than that his perverse nature suspected them of trying to injure him. Prince Kurbski, one of his ablest generals, suffered a repulse while fighting the Poles, and showed his wisdom by applying to them for protection, knowing that his life would not be worth a pin after Ivan was able to lay hands on him. No intelligent person can doubt that this strange man was a victim, more or less, of insanity, for on no other theory can his conduct be explained. His wild rage was turned against whole towns, and multitudes were put to death in Tver, Novgorod, and Moscow. Historians tell us that in the space of six weeks he caused the massacre of 60,000 persons—some say about one-half of that number—at Novgorod, because he suspected them of being engaged in a plot to deliver the town and neighborhood to the King of Poland.

Philip, the "Patriarch," or head of the Russian Church, dared to rebuke the monster for his wickedness, though well did Philip know that the rebuke meant death. Ivan professed the utmost horror that any one should accuse so saintly a man as himself of crime, and he had Philip executed. He claimed to be above the Church and assumed authority over it as well as over the State, thus becoming absolute lord of life and death. His peasantry, as religious as they were superstitious, thereafter bowed down to him utterly. Even though he slew them, they were satisfied that he had exercised his wisdom as to what was best, and the survivors were grateful that he took so much trouble to attend to them.

In 1564 Ivan withdrew for a time with a few associates from Moscow to a village near by, which he strongly fortified. His people thereupon came in crowds to pray him to return. He strengthened Russia by annexing the fiefs and by his foreign conquests. Like most monsters of cruelty, he affected deep piety. He could repeat whole chapters from the Bible, published a defence of religion, like Henry VIII. of England, and then violated every commandment. You may see his well-thumbed Bible to-day in the British Museum.

There was a marked similarity in the conjugal experiences of the British and Russian rulers, though Ivan did not go to the extent of Henry and chop off the heads of the spouses who failed to please him. Some of his wives died, some he put away, and he was arranging to marry his eighth consort, when death stepped in and closed proceedings.

No good can be done by relating the atrocities of this wretch, who in a fit of rage fractured the skull of his eldest son with an iron staff. Remorse for this horrifying act followed him to his death, which took place shortly after in 1584. Indeed, he died almost in despair, for he knew he had deprived himself of his only competent successor. He expired suddenly while playing chess, having interrupted his game to berate with furious scorn his half-witted second son who stood beside him.

Like all such monsters who have crimsoned the pages of history, Ivan was a coward at heart, and yet he was not the first nor the last, who, despite his wickedness, did good for his country. We have learned how he spread education among the masses. He strengthened the empire by building many powerful fortresses; he encouraged trade with England and welcomed foreigners to his dominions; numerous buildings were erected in Moscow; and he gave his people another legal code and improved Church affairs by his "Book of the Hundred Chapters." Ivan always had a good understanding with Queen Elizabeth of England, and, as if he feared his subjects would some time rise and cast him out, he arranged with her to give him shelter should the necessity ever arise.

He left two sons, Feodore and Dimitri. The younger was an infant, while Feodore was a sickly imbecile of twenty-seven, who was married to a sister of Boris Godonov, of whom we shall hear more. Feodore was so feeble, mentally and bodily, that the chief authority fell into the hands of Boris, who was a powerful boyar, or nobleman, but ambitious and hypocritical to the last degree, shrinking from no crime that could aid in his ambitious schemes. He had nothing to fear from the idiotic Feodore, but Dimitri stood in his way. This child died mysteriously in May, 1591, and, although Boris affected great grief over its death, it is impossible not to believe he was the murderer of the little one. He was suspected by many despite his efforts to divert suspicion, and his lavish distribution of relief when most of Moscow was burned. The Khan of the Crimea made a savage raid into the country in 1591, but the underwitted Feodore continued to amuse himself by ringing the church bells, which was his favorite employment. Boris displayed great energy in fortifying the city and repelling the invaders, but it was impossible to make the people like him. When the young child of Feodore suddenly died, there were plenty to whisper that it was by the same hand that had removed Dimitri.

Boris, however, kept grimly at work strengthening his country. He fortified Smolensk, an outpost of the empire, built Archangel, and entered into negotiations with foreign powers. The imbecile Feodore died in 1598, and Boris was elected his successor. He was too wise to show any eagerness in accepting the office, but retired to a monastery where he spent several weeks, apparently in prayer and meditation. Then he came forth and took his seat upon the throne, and as might have been anticipated, displayed vigor and ability. During a dreadful famine in 1601 he did much to relieve the distress, but found it always impossible to gain the confidence or affection of his people.

It was about this time that a rumor spread through Russia that Dimitri, the son of Ivan the Terrible, was not dead, but was living in Poland. It perhaps is not strange that so many pretenders have appeared, not only in Russia but in other countries, and one is sometimes tempted to believe that possibly in more than a single instance they were really what they claimed to be.

The young man who was said to be Dimitri was employed as a servant in the family of a Polish prince, where he declared his identity, and said he had escaped through the help of a physician, whom Boris had hired to take his life. The young man showed a seal and a golden cross which he declared had been given to him by his godfather. The Polish prince whom he served seemed to credit the story of the adventurer, as did others of station and influence. He conducted himself with dignity, and by his pleasing manners and deportment added to those who believed in his claims.

Of course it is impossible at this late day to say of a certainty who this

young man was, nor is it important to know. There is little doubt that he was a pretender, and the general supposition is that he was a monk. Be that as it may, it is easy to understand that the news was anything but pleasing to Boris, who made many attempts to get hold of his rival, but the youth kept safely beyond his reach.

The pretender was received with royal honors by the palatine of Sandomir, whose daughter was betrothed to him. The young man abjured the Greek faith and made extravagant settlements from the Russian Empire which he hoped to obtain. Finally, Sigismund III. of Poland, who was a fanatical Roman Catholic, assigned to him a large pension and publicly acknowledged him as Czar. Everything being in readiness, the adventurer, on the last day of October, 1604, invaded Russia, town after town submitting until he reached Novgorod Severski. Here a hard battle was fought in which, through the ability and vigor of the Russian commander, Basmanov, the pretender was decisively defeated. The Czar seemed suspicious of every one, and recalling Basmanov, put Chouiski, another general, in his place. In a battle fought on the 21st of January, the adventurer's forces were almost annihilated. With the remnant he retreated and remained inactive for several months.

In the midst of these stirring events, Boris suddenly died on the 13th of April, 1605, after he had reigned for six years, his death probably being due to poison, which had long before become the favorite means of removing a troublesome opponent. Devious as were the ways by which he reached the throne, it cannot be denied that he was a progressive and energetic ruler, who did all he could to lift Russia from her isolation, and who, as one means of introducing Western ideas into the empire, sent numbers of bright youths to Western Europe to be educated, though most of the Russians who thus left their country did not return. One backward step, however, was taken by him when he sanctioned the binding of the Russian serfs to the soil, so that they could be sold and bought with the land.

Feodore II., son of Boris, was sixteen years old when proclaimed his successor. His weakness led many to fall away from him, and, Basmanov, who had done valiant service for his father, and who had again been called to the command of the army, deliberately went over to the pretender Dimitri, whom he proclaimed as the Czar. Dimitri ordered him to advance against the capital. He was successful, and entering Moscow in triumph, again proclaimed his new master. A frenzied uprising followed in which Feodore and his mother were murdered. Dimitri entered Moscow on the 30th of June, 1605, and after a series of processions and fastings, paid a visit to the Queen of Boris, whom he claimed as his mother. She must have penetrated the deception at a glance, but, in the hope of gaining advantage thereby, professed to

recognize him, though she was equally ready afterward to declare him an impostor.

The pretender now made the fatal blunder of alienating those who had rallied ardently to his support. He treated the people with contempt, neglected Russian customs, and showed an open fondness for the Roman Catholics. Mariana, his betrothed, came to Moscow with a splendid retinue the following year, but the people were enraged through seeing the city filled with heretic Poles. The two were married in May, and within the following fortnight a conspiracy broke out, at the head of which was Chouiski, who had already been pardoned for taking part in a similar plot. Hearing the wild confusion at night, and reading its fearful meaning, the terrified Dimitri tried to escape by leaping from his window into the courtyard below, but his fall broke his leg, and he was unable to rise. As he lay helpless, he was stabbed to death by the assassins. Basmanov was killed in an adjoining apartment, and the two bodies were exposed for several days, after which that of Dimitri was burnt. Thus perished one whose real history can never be known, though it was believed at the time he was an unfrocked priest. Mariana knelt to Chouiski and was spared and placed in prison. We shall soon hear more of her.

The soil of Russia seemed to favor a crop of pretenders. Hardly had the boyars convened and elected Chouiski as Vassili or Basil VI., when a second false Dimitri appeared, and with a horde of adventurers seized and fortified a village barely eight miles from Moscow. Bands of ruffians joined him with no other object than pillage, and Mariana, to escape returning to her native Poland as an object of ridicule and scorn, pretended to recognize her husband in the man who, on her theory, must have escaped death through a miracle. Although the impostor was successful at first, his strength rapidly dwindled, and, venturing nearer Moscow, he suffered a crushing repulse. Later he was murdered by one of his own lawless followers.

The "Period of Troubles," as it has been termed, led the Poles in September, 1609, to invade Russia. Encountering Chouiski near Moscow they defeated his followers and took him prisoner. He was sent to Poland where he died soon after in confinement. Then Ladislaus of Poland, son of Sigismund III., forced his election as Czar. The Russians were so exhausted and wearied with strife, that they made no resistance or protest, and he held supreme power until 1613, when after a savage struggle the Poles were expelled from the country. At a meeting of the boyars, Michael Romanoff, a youth of sixteen, was elected Czar. He was on his mother's side a grandson of Ivan the Terrible, but his popularity was mainly due to the esteem felt for his father, the bishop of Rostoff, who had suffered much for his country. Thus the present royal family of Russia, the Romanoffs, ascended the throne in 1613.

The reign of Michael III. (1613-1645) was anything but tranquil. The persistent Poles still held many districts, while marauding bands of Cossacks terrorized the people. Their leader resisted all assaults in Astrakhan for a time, and Mariana fled to him with her infant child by the second Dimitri. The leader, Mariana, and her little one were all captured in 1614, and brought to Moscow, where the robber and the child were put to death and the mother imprisoned for life.

The Poles would not recognize Michael as Czar, and Ladislaus was determined to march upon Moscow, but in 1618 a long truce was agreed upon. The Pole still withheld his acknowledgment of Michael, but never attempted again to enforce his claim. The father of Michael, who had been long held in captivity by the Poles, was now permitted to return to his native country, where he was made Patriarch, and assisted the rule of his son. The Polish King died in 1632, and two years later a treaty was ratified by which Poland retained possession of Smolensk and Chernigov, but recognized Michael as Czar and abandoned all claim to the crown of Russia.

The most annoying trouble of the Czar was with his nobles, who were venomously jealous of his power. By deception and through false charges they led him to divorce his first wife, and it is probable they poisoned his second wife. Russia felt more strongly every year the impact of Western civilization. Adventurers flocked into the country, the Scotch being the most numerous, and their descendants, with their original names curiously twisted, may be found throughout the empire to this day.

About this time a party of Cossacks of the Don, a territory belonging to Russia, aided by others that were nominally subject to Poland, made a raid against the Turks and seized the town of Azov, which gave the Russians a foothold on the Black Sea. They offered it to the Czar, who called his council to decide whether to accept or decline the gift. Agents were sent to examine the place, and they reported that the defences were in so tumble-down a condition that a great deal of money would be required to rebuild them, and finally the post was too advanced for Russia to occupy. Accordingly, the proposed present was declined with thanks, no one dreaming of what was coming on a much grander scale before the closing of that century.

At Michael's death in 1645 he was succeeded by his son Alexis, who was Czar till 1676. Hardly had he begun his reign when lo! a third false Dimitri sprang upon the stage and began disporting before the public. He would have attracted no attention but for Queen Christina of Sweden, who treated him as if he were what he claimed to be. She disliked Russia and took this method of annoying the Czar. Perhaps this new Dimitri was unduly puffed up by this consideration from the sovereign of another country, for he strolled

over into the dominions of the Duke of Holstein, who handed him to the agents of Alexis in Prussian Saxony. He was escorted to Moscow and promptly put to death.

The empire was in sore distress, for the burdensome taxes, the abuses of justice, and the almost total destruction of the coinage by its debasement caused bloody riots, and the wretched peasants, goaded to rebellion, were slain without mercy. It has been shown that the Book of Ordinances, which was a development of the previous codes, was published in 1647. The Czar put forth every effort to see that impartial justice was administered throughout his dominions, but he made the mistake, often repeated elsewhere, of thinking that ferocious punishments can stamp out wrong-doing. Thus one of his decrees was that any man who smoked a pipe should have his nose cut off, and yet thousands used tobacco in that form, and some of the portraits of the Emperors shortly after showed that they were devotees to the weed.

A noticeable occurrence during this reign was the Russianizing of the Cossacks, who have since played so important a part in the history of the empire. Our earliest knowledge of them is when they were a mixed race of adventurers occupying the sparsely populated section south of Russia and Poland, where they formed a sort of moving wall between the countries named and the dominions of the Tartars and Turks. One powerful tribe lived on the Don and the other on the Dnieper, of which the former became subjects of Russia under Ivan the Terrible. The tribe on the Dnieper formed a free military republic, though they acknowledged the Poles as their masters. These wild, picturesque horsemen made raids over hundreds of miles and sometimes defiantly drew rein under the gates of Constantinople itself, sneered at the defenders, or sent jeering messages to the Sultan who showed no wish to meet them on anything like equal terms.

Any one would suppose the Poles would show appreciation of the many services of the Cossacks, but, instead of doing so, they treated them with the greatest harshness, as if they were so many abject slaves not entitled to the slightest consideration. Many of the Cossack leaders were put to death with such brutality that the wonder is the tribe submitted so long. But the time came when the worm turned. The Cossacks repaid with fierce interest the outrages they had suffered. So furious was their revenge that when Casimir became King of Poland, he sent proposals to treat with them for the settlement of their quarrel. Even then the Poles were guilty of perfidy and could not act with any regard to honor. In the subsequent fighting, the Cossacks were reduced to the final extremity, and, as a last resort, they sent messengers to the Czar in 1652, with the offer to transfer their allegiance to him. The

offer was promptly accepted, and since that time they have formed a part of the Russian nationality.

It must be remembered that the Poles or Lithuanians had conquered much of Western Russia. Under Alexis I. a good deal of territory was regained, including Smolensk, Chernigov, and several places beyond the Dnieper. Even Kief itself was temporarily recovered, and afterward its acquisition was made permanent. Few achievements have caused the Russians such exultation as this recapture of their ancient capital.

The Bible in use at that time contained many errors due to ignorant copyists. Two councils of the Church were held in 1655–56, which called in the old-service books and substituted the newly translated ones. This caused a schism in the Russian church, for changes of that character always provoke opposition, and many adhered to the old books, despite their numerous mistakes. These people were called Raskilniks, and they exist to-day, though they have gone through many cruel persecutions.

Alexis, who died in 1676, was twice married. The children of his first wife were two sons, Feodore and Ivan, and a daughter Sophia and other children. By his second wife he had one son, Peter. Feodore succeeded his father, but he was a weakling and at his death, in 1682, left no children. Keeping these facts in mind, you will understand the important events that follow.

74



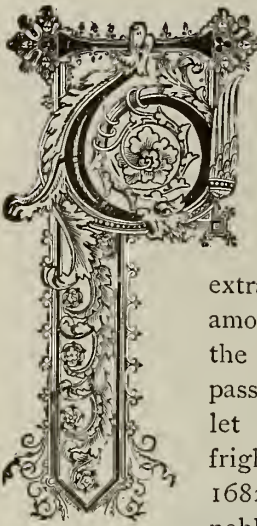
IVAN THE GREAT ENTERING KAZAN



PETER THE GREAT AT PULTOWA

Chapter CXXII

PETER, THE EMPIRE BUILDER



HE death of Feodore brought a crisis in Russian history. The court was divided into bitter factions, and Ivan, the second son of Alexis, was weaker and more incompetent than Feodore had been. Naturally the relatives of the second wife wished to put him aside and make Peter the Czar. But an obstacle presented itself in Sophia, the full sister of Ivan, who displayed extraordinary ability and vigor. Spurning the seclusion usual among the females of the royal family, she appeared before the Strelitz, or national guard, and roused them to fury by a passionate appeal for justice toward her brother. Then she let loose the troops who were howling for vengeance. A frightful carnage lasted from the 15th to the 18th of May, 1682, during which nearly a hundred members of the most noble families in Russia were massacred.

The boy Peter and his mother fled to a convent. They were pursued even to the foot of the altar, but when the mother called down the vengeance of Heaven upon her assailants, they hesitated and spared her. Still upon the whole, Sophia was successful. In July, Ivan and Peter were crowned as joint rulers, and Sophia was appointed as regent. She held this important office for seven years.

Here we must turn aside for a few minutes to trace the career of a remarkable man who had much to do with the fortunes of Peter I., or the Great. He was Patrick Gordon, a native of Scotland, born in 1635. Finding the university of his own country closed against him, because of his devotion to the

Roman Catholic faith of his mother, he determined, at the age of sixteen, to use his own words, "to go to some foreign country, not caring much on what pretense, or to what country I should go, seeing I had no known friend in any foreign place."

After many warlike adventures he decided to enter the service of the Czar Alexis. He did so in 1661, and was immediately satisfied that he had taken the wisest step of his life. The Russian soldiers needed nothing so much as training, and he set to work with a success that brought him rapid promotion. He was made colonel in 1665, when he learned that the death of his elder brother in Scotland had brought him wealth and title, provided he went home to claim them. He wished to do so, but the Czar would not permit it, though he sent him on a mission to England in 1666. On his return he was ordered to serve against the Cossacks. These being subdued, he was sent to defend Tschigrin against the Turks and Tartars. His brilliant performance of this duty made him a major-general, and added greatly to his military reputation. He became lieutenant-general in 1683, and two years later was permitted to visit England and Scotland. King James II. invited him to enter the English service, but his petition for leave to remove his possessions from Russia was denied. He returned and, in 1688, was made general. Then began his intimacy with Czar Peter to whose history we now return.

No attention had been paid to the education of Peter up to the time of his coronation. He was anxious to make up for this loss, and availed himself of the accomplishments of Lieutenant Franz Timmerman, a native of Strasburg, who drilled him in military art and taught him mathematics. He next was fortunate enough to fall under the guidance of François Lefort, a native of Geneva, who, after serving for some time in the French and Dutch service, went to Russia where he obtained a captain's commission in the army. He fought bravely against the Turks and Tartars, and became the devoted friend of Peter, with whom he was a favorite until his death.

Lefort was highly accomplished and showed Peter how much his empire was behind the rest of Europe in the sciences and arts of civilization. The Czar was so impressed that his whole career was influenced. Lefort formed a small military company out of the young men of noble families and enlisted Peter as a drummer boy. He subjected him to strict discipline and training, until step by step the young Czar advanced to the highest rank. This peculiar experience was of the highest benefit to Peter, and no doubt saved him from the jealousy of his half-sister, who seeing him so infatuated with his little company, believed he was wholly given up to amusement—a tremendous mistake as she was soon to learn.

Peter the Great was by nature an animal, coarse, sensual, passionate, and

absolutely merciless in his hates. He was like some shaggy beast, only restrained from evil by the diversion of his energies elsewhere. His ambition was to regenerate Russia. He had no time to give way to his furious passions.

In February, 1689, in opposition to the wishes of the regent Sophia, but by his mother's advice, he married Eudoxia Feodorowna. This marriage was an unhappy one. Of the two children born the elder was the unfortunate Alexis, while the younger died in infancy.

A few months after this marriage, Peter called upon his sister to resign the government. She refused, and a savage struggle began between the two for supremacy. At first matters went against Peter, who was compelled to flee for his life. He took refuge in the monastery of the Troitsa and called upon his soldiers to follow him. Gordon and Lefort hurried thither with the troops under their command, and through their timely aid won the life-long gratitude of Peter. The Strelitz, which had been the mainstay of Sophia, deserted her and rallied to the standard of Peter. She was seized and sent to a convent, where until her death, in 1704, she continued to annoy the Czar by ceaseless intrigues.

On October 11, 1689, Peter entered Moscow in triumph, and was met by his feeble co-ruler Ivan, to whom he gave the nominal supremacy, while he reserved the exercise of real power to himself. Ivan enjoyed his phantom authority till his death in 1696. He was only thirty years old when he died, and left three daughters, Catherine, Anne, and Praskovia. Peter at this time (1689) was only seventeen, and, great as was his ability, he could not have walked alone without his able and brilliant aids, Gordon and Lefort.

His first step on assuming the Government was to organize an army and train it according to European tactics. In this the help of Gordon and Lefort was invaluable. He strove also to form a navy, but had to contend against enormous natural disadvantages. Russia was shut out from the Baltic by Sweden and Poland, the former of which possessed Finland, St. Petersburg (then known as Ingria) and the Baltic provinces, while Turkey excluded her from the Black Sea, the Sultan's realm having been extended all along the north coast of that important body of water. This left only the White Sea and the frozen Arctic Ocean, with the single port of Archangel, for the use of the Russian navy.

Peter determined to gain at least a foothold on the Black Sea, so he declared war against Turkey, and, in 1696, Gordon captured the city of Azov at the mouth of the Don. He was obliged to besiege it for a long time, because his newly disciplined army had not yet been moulded into the formidable machine it afterward became.

Having gained an accessible seaboard and port, Peter now summoned skilled engineers, architects, and artillerymen from Austria, Venice, Prussia, and Holland, and the utmost energy was displayed in constructing ships and improving the arms and discipline of the army. He ordered many members of his nobility to travel in foreign countries, chiefly Holland and Italy, and gather knowledge that could be used in civilizing and modernizing Russia.

Peter's prodigious will and ambition could not be content with doing this important work by proxy. He knew none of his subjects were as able as himself. He looked upon the common people as so many cattle and upon his nobles in much the same way, feeling that their rank alone lifted them above the lower herd. All were helpless before that mailed hand which was ever ready to smite like the thunderbolt from the heavens. He may have infused some of his own tremendous energy into them, but what assurance could he have that they would prove equal to the supreme test? Would not great obstacles, hardships, and labors cause them to fall by the wayside? In short, was he not himself the single appointed agent of Heaven to upbuild the mighty empire of Russia?

Peter deliberately resolved to leave his throne and fit himself to return to it. He determined to go to Holland, then the greatest of commercial nations, and perfect himself in a practical knowledge of maritime science. Until then he had not been represented at any European court. His first step, therefore, was to fit out a magnificent embassy to the States-General of Holland. The Czar himself travelled incognito as a simple attaché of the mission. Arriving at Riga, by way of Esthonia and Livonia, Peter asked permission to examine the fortifications and met with a curt refusal. He flamed up, but could not help himself—just then. He, however, stored away the insult, as he viewed it, for future revenge.

Passing through Prussia, the embassy was received with great ceremony by the King at Königsberg. The Germans and Russians fraternized. All were enormous drinkers and they spent days and nights in carousal. None of them could surpass the Czar in that respect, but he was engaged upon far too important an errand, and was learning to put the curb upon his tempestuous nature. He left the embassy and hurried to Holland, his ultimate destination, impatient to get to work at the trade he had selected. At Saardam he hired out as a common ship-carpenter, receiving his pittance in wages every Saturday night, and boiling his own pot each day for dinner. He hired lodgings from a seafaring man named Kist, whom he had met in Archangel, and took the name of Peter Mikhailov, or Peter Baas (Master) as the Dutch called him. Of course his identity was known to all, but he insisted upon being treated as a common workman, and so far as possible his wishes were respected.

Where exceptional mechanical ability, inflexible resolution, and insatiate ambition unite, the result is certain. Sooner than any of his associates he became an accomplished shipbuilder. His first venture was to buy a small yacht, which he so refitted that it was virtually a new vessel. Seated in this boat he made the Dutchmen stare by the agility with which he dodged in and out among the shipping in the harbor, and dashed ahead of those who had the temerity to engage in a test of speed. His massive physique, for he was a perfect Hercules, withstood the ceaseless draughts made upon it by almost endless labor, the appetite of a wolf, and the thirst of a fever patient. Soon he was to give an astonishing proof of his skill by building, from his own draft and model, a sixty-gun ship, assisting in its carpentry, and producing a vessel which, competent judges said, was one of the finest turned out in the dockyards of Holland.

Peter by no means confined himself to the study of maritime matters. He gained a fair knowledge of civil engineering, mathematics, and the construction of fortifications. He learned to speak the language of the country as well as the Dutchmen themselves, and visited and looked closely into various charitable, literary and scientific institutions, in order that he might intelligently introduce them into his own country. It is said he learned tooth-pulling and blood-letting, and certainly his later career proved him an adept at the latter.

He must have cut a strange figure as he hustled here and there, eternally asking questions of whomsoever he fancied could answer him. No matter what he saw, he would not be satisfied until he knew all about it. Sometimes the sluggish Hollanders got in his way, or rather did not get out of it quickly enough to please him. Then he would forget their language and berate them in his own, emphasizing his curses by whacks over the head with his heavy cane. If the offender was still slow in moving, he would seize him by the scruff of the neck and fling him aside like a child. Surely the man who intended to qualify himself to become the instructor of a nation numbering millions must stop at no means necessary to hasten in the pursuit of knowledge.

Peter remained some months in Holland, earning a certificate of skill which is still preserved. The brief period which he required to learn shipbuilding leaves no question as to his natural ability. William III. of England sent him an invitation to visit that country, and Peter spent three months there. Queen Mary was dead, but the Czar called upon the King, the Princess Anne, and many of the nobility. He was anxious to study the navy yards, dockyards, and maritime establishments, and to gain all the practical knowledge possible of naval architecture. He still preserved his incognito, though he did not work in the dockyards. King William showed him much attention and did

what he could to assist him in gathering the knowledge he was so eager to obtain.

At first Peter lodged in York Buildings, but he wished to be nearer the sea, and occupied a house known as Sayes Court, where, says an old chronicler, "he would often take up the carpenter's tools, and work with them; and he frequently conversed with the builders, who showed him their draughts, and the method of laying down, by proportion, any ship or vessel." When he felt the need of exercise in the morning, he trundled a wheelbarrow rapidly back and forth. Looking at the burly form, dashing to and fro, behind the squeaking vehicle, who, not knowing the truth, would have imagined that he was Czar of all the Russias? The King had instructed the Marquis of Caermarthen to look after Peter's wants, and the two became intimate friends. They generally spent the evenings together with pipes and beer at a tavern long known as the "Czar of Muscovy."

The busy, far-seeing brain of Peter had already formed the design of uniting the Volga, the Don, and the Caspian by a series of locks and canals, and he not only gave his chief attention to the study of engineering, but engaged a large number of engineers to carry out the project for him. The scheme, however, proved a failure, which would have been laughable had it not been pitiful. The engineers accompanied Peter on his return for the purpose of developing the internal improvements of the empire. They had been promised liberal wages and they did their duty faithfully. They never received so much as a rouble in the way of payment, and such as were not assassinated by jealous Russians found their way home after several years like so many ragged tramps. Peter's brains were so filled with his colossal schemes that he could not afford time to think of the obligations of honor.

Despite the shabby treatment these scientific visitors received, they conferred several important benefits upon Russia. Among other improvements, they introduced the art of reckoning by Arabic numerals. Previous to that time accounts were kept by means of a series of balls upon a string, as the scores in the game of billiards are marked. You may find the old system in use, even at this day, in some parts of the Czar's dominions.

Peter could be magnificent when he chose. He had received the best of treatment from King William. When he called to say good-by to the monarch of England, he took a small package of brown paper from his pocket and handed it to his august friend. William, upon unrolling the paper, found nestling within a superb "pigeon-blood" ruby worth \$50,000. Nor did the Czar forget the pleasant hours spent with Lord Caermarthen, in the quaint old tavern. To him the Czar presented the right to license every hogshead of tobacco exported to Russia, and to charge five shillings for each license. This

right of exportation was purchased by an English company, which paid \$75,000 for the monopoly.

At Vienna Peter was received with great pomp, and he would have made his homeward journey at a leisurely pace, and perhaps given himself up to many of the gross enjoyments of which he had deprived himself, while acquiring his vast fund of information. Disquieting tidings, however, awaited him. A furious insurrection of the Strelitz had broken out in Moscow. With the news came word that it had been put down by Patrick Gordon; but Peter was impatient to take matters in his own hand. He felt himself master of the trade of bloodletting and grimly remarked that the time to exercise it had arrived. He, therefore, abandoned his intended visit to Italy and hurried to his capital.

The first thing he did was to suspend several of the rebellious Strelitz in front of Sophia's prison window, others were hanged and quartered, and a number broken upon the wheel. Peter is said to have slain many with his own hand. The Strelitz were fairly wiped out, and are heard of no more in the history of Russia.

It was impossible for this elephantine fury to stay idle. His ambition was to gain a seacoast for his country: for without a seacoast his navy was useless and he would be hindered in introducing Western civilization. Centuries previous the Baltic lands of Ingria, Esthonia, and Livonia had belonged to his empire and he was resolved to wrest them again from Sweden. Until the time should come for striking the blow, he occupied himself with smaller things. He formed a disgust for the beards and cumbersome petticoats which his subjects wore. He, therefore, laid a tax on them. But his subjects paid the tax and continued to wear both. Then Peter increased the tax, which, failing of its purpose, he had recourse to more drastic measures. He placed tailors and barbers at the different gates of Moscow, and under his orders beards were shaved off and petticoats cut down to what he considered decent proportions. His course was very offensive to his people, and the clergy denounced the Czar as Antichrist, for which he cared not a straw. Their amazement was unbounded when he changed the commencement of the year from the 1st of September to the 1st of January. A good many inquired whether his next step would not be to order a change in the course of the sun.

A loss which caused him great grief was the death of General Gordon, which took place in November, 1699, his last years being crowned with opulence and honors through the affectionate gratitude of the Czar. Gordon's biographer says: "The Czar, who had visited him five times during his illness, and had been twice with him during the night, stood weeping by his bed as he

THE STORY OF THE GREATEST NATIONS and The World's Famous Events

will include the Histories of the following countries: *BABYLONIA and ASSYRIA, The HEBREWS, The PHOENICIANS, EGYPT, PERSIA, GREECE, ROME, GERMANY, AUSTRIA, FRANCE, ENGLAND and Its COLONIES, RUSSIA, SPAIN, CHINA, JAPAN, TURKEY, NORWAY, SWEDEN, DENMARK, HOLLAND, BELGIUM, THE UNITED STATES, SOUTH AMERICA, etc.*

Every one should read history, especially the young, because a knowledge of it is absolutely essential in all walks of life. So fully is the value of history recognized that over half the reading done in the world is historical. This is because the entire social organization of to-day is the product of the Past. By knowing the Past you can better understand the Present, and can more clearly foresee the Future. Hence you can live more comfortably, more wisely, and more profitably. Moreover History tells you the sources of all other knowledge, and makes human character and motives an open book.

A FEW REASONS WHY

THIS IS THE BEST HISTORY YOU COULD POSSIBLY BUY

1. It is entirely free from religious, sectional or political bias.
2. The tissue narrative makes it just a succession of stories.
3. The text narrative makes it thoroughly complete and reliable.
4. The story is simply told, easy to understand, scholarly, yet not pedantic.
5. There is no confusion; the story of each country is told by itself from start to finish.
6. It will end the complaints of your children that history is dry.
7. It is fully up-to-date, based on the most recent discoveries. The ancient history of a dozen years ago was all wrong.
8. There are brief chronological summaries so you can review and remember what you read.
9. There is a pronouncing vocabulary for each nation, so you can use the names correctly in telling others what you have read.
10. To aid the student in further reading, there is given for each nation a list of the best authorities and their best books.
11. The mechanical part is perfect, large clear type, highest grade illustrations, etc.
12. The books will last, for they are made of the best grade of paper, best ink, best everything.
13. The vividly instructive method of the modern motion pictures is here carried into history.
14. The pictures make the story appeal to the eye, and so aid the memory.
15. They form in themselves a complete history from which you learn unconsciously and rapidly.
16. Each picture gives dozens of details of costume, etc., which would take pages of text to describe.
17. The pictures include most of the famous historical paintings of the world gathered from every country.
18. Thus they form an art education in themselves, including the work of Chinese artists, Japanese, ancient Persians, Egyptians, and Babylonians, besides the work of such more modern masters as:

THE ITALIANS AND SPANIARDS

Michelangelo
Titian
Veronese
Corregio
Riva
Velasquez

THE GERMANS

Durer
Rembrandt
Rubens
Van Dyke
Kaulbach
Bendemann
Makart

THE FRENCH

David
Dore
Gerome
Cabanel
Bougereau
Tissot
Roche-grosse

THE ENGLISH

Hogarth
Turner
Martin
Alma-Tadema
Lord Leighton
Riviere
Hunt

THE AMERICANS AND OTHERS

West
Sargent
Abbey
Bridgman
Munkacsy
Piloty

and other masters too numerous to mention.

TERMS OF PUBLICATION

1. The work will be completed in 81 sections of 24 pages of text.
2. Each section will contain 12 full-page illustrations and 12 pages of picture descriptions.
3. The complete work will contain ten photogravures printed on Japan-Vellum paper, several historical maps specially prepared and over nine hundred and fifty other full-page illustrations printed on enamelled paper, besides hundreds of text illustrations.
4. No subscriber's name will be received for less than the complete work, and no order can be cancelled.
5. The sections are payable on delivery, the carrier not being permitted to give credit or receive money in advance.
6. Subscribers removing or not being regularly supplied will please address the publisher.